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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 4 May 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland)

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(a) Annual report of the Executive Director for 1991 and programme-level activities

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 1 of the provisional agenda) (DP/1992/L.14 and Corr. 1; DP/1992/10 and 11)

Opening of the session

1. The PRESIDENT declared open the thirty-ninth session of the Governing Council and welcomed all the participants. He was confident that the work of the session would, as usual, take place in an atmosphere of close cooperation among the members of the Bureau, the national delegations and the Administrator and his staff. Recalling that he had refrained from making an introductory statement at the organizational session held in February, he said he wished to express some personal views regarding the work of UNDP and of the Governing Council.

2. Since its establishment in the 1960s, the Programme had retained a number of its main characteristics, in particular its universal nature. It had also developed considerably, but the world had changed still more. It might be asked how UNDP had reacted to the changes that had taken place in the world, including the changes in the United Nations system itself, and whether it could evolve further and adapt. In his own opinion, the Governing Council and the representatives of the Member States had a duty to consider that question and try to provide an answer. The agenda and the programme of work for the thirty-ninth session, which were particularly heavy, left little time for such a task. Moreover, like the documentation, they constituted a rather unstructured and confusing mix of policy, operational and administrative issues. That was all the more regrettable since the Governing Council should, at its annual meeting, focus on policy issues and priority operational guidance.

3. Nevertheless, he had great hopes for the high-level segment scheduled for the following week as well as for the seminar which was to take place in that context. He suggested that, in the future, greater use should be made of the presence in the Council of leading personalities of the development community. A special working meeting, perhaps in the form of a restricted meeting of high-level participants only, might be considered in order to hold an informal but well-structured exchange of views on development policies between decision-makers in development cooperation representing both recipient and donor countries. Such a meeting would well complement the more formal deliberations of the high-level segment.

4. Another innovation should be the separation of general policy questions from management issues. What seemed to be lacking was a forum or body - perhaps smaller in size and of an inter-sessional character - to offer operational guidance, i.e. to provide support and advice to the Administrator and, where appropriate, to take decisions on issues of a purely operational or administrative nature on behalf of the Council. That would enable the Council to shorten its annual sessions and concentrate on essentials. That idea was, of course, included in the project concerning the United Nations which had been proposed by the Nordic countries and was to be considered at the Economic and Social Council's next session and then submitted to the General Assembly. He therefore invited delegations to consider, at least informally, the

question of a possible reform of the system so as not to leave decisions on a possible UNDP reform to be taken without any input from the Governing Council.

5. That being so, there were some steps that the Council itself could take. Firstly, the Bureau could play a far more helpful role than it currently did in guiding the work of the Council and in acting as an intermediary - particularly intersessionally - between Governments, their delegations in New York and the Administration. The members of the Bureau should be elected not just before the organizational session but at the end of the annual session preceding the year in which they formally assumed their functions and responsibilities. Such an innovation would certainly facilitate and improve the work of the Council.

6. Secondly, a change in attitudes was necessary, both with regard to the role and responsibilities of the Council in relation to the Administration, and in the Council's attitude to global changes. In multilateral development and financial institutions and in the private sector alike, the relations between governing bodies and management were never easy: in that regard, the key was mutual trust and full transparency. There was room for improvement in that regard in UNDP also. The Administrator should be given more freedom and leeway to implement the policies and programmes approved by the Council after thorough and careful consideration. In turn, he should always come back to the Council whenever he felt that there was a need to obtain further guidance or policy support. Perhaps, there too, the Bureau in its new form could act as an intermediary between sessions. The Council should, for its part, refrain from detailed and frequently repetitive discussions on the implementation of agreed policies and from requesting numerous detailed reports on management procedures, since micro-management was not one of its functions. The Administration was responsible for preparing and organizing the meetings of the Council. In that connection, the agenda should be better structured, agenda items on which reports had been issued beforehand should not, as a rule, be introduced orally, and some reports could, perhaps, be distributed intersessionally for information only.

7. With regard to the attitude to be adopted to changes in the world outside the traditional UNDP framework, he stressed that the Council's primary task was to serve the Programme in an impartial, efficient and cost-effective way in its efforts to provide assistance to recipients. Only in so doing could the credibility of UNDP be maintained both in the donor community, which was facing competing pressures for resources, and in the recipient community, which was continually seeking the most efficient assistance to meet its pressing needs. UNDP must adapt itself to the developing situation. New needs and challenges were emerging, including environmental and humanitarian assistance to new recipients and poverty groups, and the new political dimension of United Nations peace-building operations in all continents. Their costs were enormous and he wondered what their implications would be for UNDP, for its future resource base and the direction of its future work. He urged the Council to bear those matters in mind, since they would all have an impact on UNDP's work.

Election of a new Vice-President

8. The PRESIDENT informed the participants that the Vice-President representing the Group of Eastern European States, Mr. Aurel Dragos Munteanu, elected at the organizational meeting, had been assigned to other duties, making it necessary for him to be replaced. The Group of Eastern European States had proposed Mr. Romulus Neagu for that post.

9. Mr. Neagu (Romania) was elected Vice-President by acclamation.

Adoption of the agenda

10. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the provisional agenda contained in document DP/1992/L.14 and Corr.1.

11. It was so decided.

Documentation

12. The PRESIDENT informed delegations that the Secretariat had provided the Bureau with some clarification concerning the documentation. In view of the exceptionally large number of documents prepared for the current session and the simultaneous preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the documentation services had had to cope with a considerable volume of work. He therefore asked for the indulgence and understanding of delegations in the event of any delay in the distribution of documents in all languages.

High-level segment

13. The PRESIDENT stressed that, in view of the great number of members and observers wishing to participate in the general debate of the high-level segment, it was essential that speakers should strictly limit their statements to 15 minutes.

Assignment of responsibilities to the Vice-Presidents

14. The PRESIDENT said that, following consultations, the Bureau had decided that the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council would be: Mr. Seniloli (Fiji) for the Budgetary and Finance Committee; Mr. Adouki (Congo) and Mr. Mayorga-Cortes (Nicaragua) for the Standing Committee for Programme Matters; and Mr. Neagu (Romania) for the Drafting Group.

Statement by the Administrator

15. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator) thanked the President for his perceptive and well-thought out preliminary statement and welcomed participants to the thirty-ninth session of the UNDP Governing Council.

16. The fiery and violent protests which had recently erupted in the United States, fuelled by deep-seated frustrations, gave some indication of the anger aroused, even in the richest country in the world, by social and

economic disparities. While the gap between the privileged and less privileged in the United States could be represented by an income ratio of one to nine, the Human Development Report 1992 pointed out that, internationally, the gap had widened to a ratio of 1 to 150. Those figures brought out graphically the urgency of UNDP's work. The various aspects of human development would be debated at a special panel discussion during the current session. UNDP was determined to make the human-development concept operational, both by elaborating concrete human-development plans and strategies and by appraising projects in the light of their potential impact on people and not merely on economies.

17. UNDP was also developing the programme approach further in order to afford greater support to national goals. Better account was being taken of the linkages between environmental management and poverty. Numerous sessions had been held on successor arrangements with UNDP's partners in the United Nations system. UNDP was pursuing its policy of national execution, taking careful account of each country's capacity to manage and direct its own programmes.

18. Various initiatives had also been taken in Africa and in some of the least-developed countries, such as mobilization of additional funds for countries affected by the drought in Eastern and Southern Africa and coordination of an effective response by the international community, improvement and streamlining of the round-table process and, in consultation with the World Bank, African Development Bank and the ECA, follow-up on national long-term perspective studies, which were laying out alternative development scenarios for African countries over the next 20 or 30 years. UNDP was also ready to begin operations in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), where its human development role and environmental focus, coupled with the principle of the universality of the Programme imposed an obligation to respond to requests for assistance from any new developing country.

19. At the current session, the Council would be examining the important question of the governance and financing of the various parts of the United Nations development system, a study of which would be presented to the next session of the Economic and Social Council. It was his intention to focus on that very important issue during the high-level debate.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (agenda item 7)

(a) ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1991 AND PROGRAMME-LEVEL ACTIVITIES (DP/1992/24, Parts I, II and III; DP/1992/25, 31 and 32).

20. Ms. SADIK (Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund) said that, before reporting on UNFPA activities and population matters, she wished to emphasize the urgency of the world demographic situation, as reflected in a number of recent international statements and documents. Although public awareness, political will and experience were not lacking, and although recent political and economic upsets and the growing concern about the environment were conducive to far-reaching action, the resources allocated to demographic programmes were still woefully inadequate.

21. The challenges to be faced were truly formidable: a total world population of 5.4 billion, with a forecast of 6 billion for 1997 and, according to United Nations median projections, 8.5 billion by the year 2025 and 10 billion by 2050. The developing countries, particularly, in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia, would see an unprecedented increase in their population during the 1990s, with repercussions that would be felt particularly at the national and regional levels, but also at the global level. All countries were affected by the linkages between poverty, population, environmental stress and the performance of national economies, if only as a result of the consequent migration flows, which had reached a record level in recent years.

22. Population issues were fundamental to the well-being, health and human rights of individual human beings. One of the major challenges to UNFPA assistance was to extend health care and family-planning services to the millions of women and men who had currently no access to such services, taking into account the needs and particular sensibilities of each individual and paying special attention to the safety and effectiveness of contraceptive methods. The participation of the community, and especially that of women, in all facets of such programmes was crucial. Women's productive and reproductive roles influenced all aspects of development, which should accordingly be directed toward improving the condition of women, starting with their education.

23. Population issues were basic to human rights and individual welfare. Significant headway had to be made immediately to achieve an equilibrium between population, available resources, the environment and development, as had been stressed by the most recent State of the World Population report, which demonstrated more clearly than ever the importance of population factors for economic progress.

24. She welcomed the inclusion of demographic questions in the problems to be discussed at UNCED, in the preparation of which UNFPA was playing an active part. It was, however, regrettable that the Preparatory Committee for the Conference had decided, after endless debate, to delete any reference to family planning, in spite of the fact that there was universal consensus on the importance of that issue. It was to be hoped that that gap would be filled at Rio.

25. She wished to inform the members of the Governing Council of the progress of the preparations for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, which was expected to adopt a limited number of action-oriented recommendations. The questions to be discussed within the framework of the overall theme of the Conference, namely population, sustained economic growth and durable development, had been distributed among six expert-group meetings. The United Nations regional commissions would also be organizing regional conferences in cooperation with UNFPA. The Conference Preparatory Committee, which had held its first meeting in March 1991, would have its second meeting in August 1993, followed by a third meeting early in 1994, to review the draft recommendations for the Conference. An Ad Hoc Task Force of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) would be holding its first formal meeting in July; its function was to coordinate the inputs from the various United Nations agencies, most of which had already designated their focal points and were participating actively in the preparatory process.

26. As Secretary-General of the Conference, she wished to call special attention to the national preparations and particularly to the need to establish broadly representative national committees as soon as possible. National reports, which should address countries' achievements in the population field, what they aimed to achieve and their strategies for doing so, would be an important input to the Conference. As for funding, UNFPA would make the fullest possible use of existing resources. Thanks were due to the Governments of Denmark, Spain, United States of America, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden for their extrabudgetary contributions, and it was to be hoped that other countries would also make voluntary contributions.

27. As for the documentation before the Governing Council, UNFPA had submitted 41 documents which were summarized in an information paper. Another paper described the organization of work proposed by UNFPA for the agenda item concerning it. The following documents merited brief introductions, which she gave: the periodic report on evaluation (DP/1992/25); the report on collaborative programming activities of UNICEF and UNFPA (DP/1992/28); the guidelines on national execution (DP/1992/29); the progress report on UNFPA successor support cost arrangements (DP/1992/30); the report on medium-term operational strategy (DP/1992/31) and the work plan for 1993-1996 and request for programme expenditure authority (DP/1992/26). In addition, the Standing Committee for Programme Matters would have before it 31 comprehensive country programmes.

28. With regard to the funding situation of UNFPA, demands far exceeded available resources even though they had been increased. As in 1990, and for the second time in its history, UNFPA had had no unused resources in 1991 to carry forward. The estimated programme expenditures in 1991 were US$ 171.8 million, as against US$ 168.9 million in 1990. Income had risen to US$ 224 million, an increase of only 5.5 per cent. There had been 96 donors in 1991, including two first-time donors (Gabon and Guinea), and 24 countries had increased their contributions by 10 per cent or more. Special appreciation in that respect was due to the Governments of Poland, Niger, Malawi, Mozambique, Romania, Luxembourg, Turkey, Austria, Mexico, Zambia, Czechoslovakia, Honduras, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Mauritius, Albania, the Philippines and Finland. In addition, various donors had contributed US$ 8.9 million to UNFPA's multi-bilateral programme. The Governments of the Netherlands and Norway had generously provided additional contributions (US$ 1.7 and 4.8 million respectively), which had enabled the Fund to meet its programme demands in 1991. As in every year since 1986, the United States Government had not made a contribution in 1991. She hoped that it would soon resume its support for the Fund. UNFPA's funding situation in 1992 continued to be of great concern. Contributions were estimated at US$ 229 million, only a 3.8 per cent increase over 1991. The Fund's traditional major donors, and indeed all other donors, should be urged to increase their support for UNFPA.

29. Project allocations had increased slightly from 1990 to 1991, rising from US$ 210.9 to 212 million. The resource-utilization rate was 103.3 per cent, compared to 100.2 per cent in 1990. The percentage of resources allocated to priority countries had declined temporarily, from 75 per cent to 72.9 per cent, for reasons beyond UNFPA's control (political and social unrest, changes in Government, the Gulf crisis, etc.), but it was expected to pick up in 1992.

30. Family planning and information, education and communication activities continued to receive the largest share of UNFPA resources (62 per cent), while expenditure in sub-Saharan Africa continued to increase in both volume and percentage terms (32 per cent compared to 29.4 per cent in 1990). The proportion of programmes executed by Governments remained substantial, despite a small decrease. UNFPA had, in particular, increased its project execution in sub-Saharan Africa. The Fund attached great importance to working closely with other organizations within the United Nations system and with non-governmental organizations to promote the participation of women in population and development activities. It had continued to strengthen its activities in the field of AIDS prevention, in close coordination with WHO, in particular, and was prepared to increase its input in that area, provided additional resources were mobilized for that purpose.

31. In connection with programme directions and new needs, UNFPA had undertaken a study to estimate contraceptive requirements throughout the developing world in the 1990s. In-depth studies would be carried out on the subject over the next 3 years in 12 developing countries including, in 1992, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Zimbabwe. A small working group, composed of representatives of various organizations, had recommended establishing a two-member team to plan and coordinate the studies. Additional funding was necessary to add to the initial funding for the team, which had been provided by the Rockefeller Foundation and the World Bank for 1992 and 1993.

32. The Fund's multisectoral approach was valued by countries and was effective. UNFPA's main focus was on maternal and child health and family planning and on the complementary areas of communication and education. However, attention was also directed to policy formulation and such essential activities as data collection, analysis and research. It intended to review experience in multilateral population programmes as an input to the 1994 Conference on Population and Development. The Council might review those findings in its 1994 session, prior to the Conference.

33. In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the needs for assistance in the field of population were tremendous. The lack of safe and reliable contraceptives and family-planning services was reflected in the high number of induced abortions, of which the highest number in the world took place in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The need for urgent and priority assistance for the CIS had been estimated at US$ 20 million over the following two years. UNFPA supplied assistance to several countries in Eastern Europe on a small scale, but only additional resources would allow it to send technical programme missions and help develop the programmes needed.

34. UNFPA continued to pay special attention to strengthening collaboration and coordination with partner organizations, including those in the United Nations system, the World Bank and the regional banks. Cooperation with UNDP in particular had always been excellent. As for non-governmental organizations, UNFPA regularly participated in two advisory bodies of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), with which it had had a number of other exchanges at global and national levels. Another NGO partner of UNFPA, the Population Council, had been co-winner of the 1992 United Nations Population Award. In general, coordination within the United Nations system tended to be rather cumbersome but noteworthy progress

was being made, particularly in the context of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and the assessment missions sent by WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP and UNFPA to the CIS and the Baltic States.

35. The Fund had actively participated in the field missions of members of the Council, as called for in Decision 91/2 of the Standing Committee on Programme Matters, and had contributed to the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities. Most importantly, pehaps, the country programme cycles were being synchronized with the programmes of UNDP, UNICEF and other organizations. UNFPA would continue to work closely with countries and with all other concerned parties in ensuring that linkages between population and environmental factors would be effectively addressed in research and, above all, within education and action programmes. It was of the utmost importance to improve the effectiveness and quality of assistance and there was thus a continued need to improve programme performance and to ensure improved financial monitoring of projects and programmes and timely feedback of evaluation and monitoring results into future programming. The full cooperation of Governments and executing agencies was crucial in that regard.

36. UNFPA continued to devote systematic attention to staff development and training, with the implementation of various training activities, including an expanded briefing programme for UNFPA representatives. In the area of administration, the Fund had decreased its operational costs by US$ 6.2 million in 1991 as a special measure. It pledged itself to remain particularly vigilant with regard to administrative costs, although the most effective way of reducing the share of operation costs was to increase the overall resources of the Fund.

37. The fundamental importance of the linkages between population, available resources and socio-economic development, and the need to re-think development philosophy and practice, coincided with a variety of changes in political and economic relationships, approaches to development and attitudes to environmental security and how to achieve it. The restructuring of the United Nations would certainly have a positive impact on operational activities and would provide better linkages between various parts of the system. In the population field, formidable but realistic strategies and targets existed, as reflected in the Amsterdam Declaration of November 1989. Furthermore, individual men and women and community leaders were making greater efforts to create a better balance between the various issues encompassing population phenomena at all levels: individual, community, nation and world. If population issues were addressed effectively and the necessary funding provided, the fourth United Nations Development Decade could provide the basis for ending poverty and sustaining a world in balance with its resources.

38. Mr. INOUE (Director of the Population Division, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development) speaking on behalf of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development, said that the strengthening of collaboration between the UNDP Governing Council and the Population Commission had been extremely useful not only for those two bodies but also for the Department of Economic and Social Development and UNFPA. The Department was a new entity which, in the context of the restructuring of the

United Nations Secretariat, had, since 1 March 1992, regrouped the following former entities: the former Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Cooperation, the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations and the Centre for Science and Technology for Development. The more diversified and multidisciplinary nature of the new Department would certainly have a favourable effect on relationships with UNDP and UNFPA. It could be an even more reliable partner for them in the area of population, since the problems between the United Nations and UNFPA concerning new arrangements for post successor costs had been resolved and the new system was due to start in January 1993.

39. Preparations for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development were proceeding very well. The Executive Director of UNFPA and the Director of the Population Division were, respectively, Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, whose secretariat had undertaken various preparatory activities, including the convening of six expert-group meetings.

40. Long-range population projections prepared by the Population Division had just been published. There were three major findings. Firstly, if the global fertility level continued to decline and stabilized at replacement level (about 2.1 children per woman), the world population would reach 11.2 billion by the end of the next century, as against 5.4 billion in 1992. That projected figure exceeded previous forecasts by 700 million, or 6.2 per cent, indicating that population trends were faster than had been previously estimated. Secondly, 98 per cent of the population increase would occur in the developing world. Lastly, it was abundantly clear that small differences in current population trends implied great differences in the long run. Assuming a fertility level slightly higher than the replacement level, the world population would be 19 billion by 2100. On the other hand, if fertility was below replacement level, it would be only 6 billion at the end of the next century. In other words, contemporary investment in population activities, especially in family-planning programmes, would yield significant dividends in the future.

41. Population issues, which were not limited to growth, greatly affected people's daily lives and efforts to achieve economic and social development. In addition, they were closely related to women's status and environmental questions. UNFPA activities thus constituted a vital part of the efforts of the international community to develop the whole world, and especially the developing countries.

42. Mr. MAHLER (Secretary-General, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)) said that the situation in the world gave grounds for pessimistic optimism, since problems previously thought impossible had finally been overcome, though too slowly and incompletely. Issues of population dynamics had become the subject of a broad-based consensus and, in most developing countries, family planning was believed to be a human right and responsibility intimately linked to the potential for development. It was generally accepted that family planning was therefore a moral right which should be available to all those who chose to exercise it.

43. The formidable challenge to be taken up by Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations was thus to improve the relevance and quality of family-planning information and services, since current programmes were not considered satisfactory by millions of users. It was necessary to take the users' perspective seriously and fully involve women in designing and delivering family-planning programmes. An enhanced political commitment to national and international financial support of such programmes was urgently needed. The attitude adopted towards those issues at recent preparatory meetings for UNCED showed that, more than ever, it was necessary to convince political and religious leadership and look for more allies in the battle. The 1992 UNICEF report was extremely heartening, since it brought out well the considerable direct and indirect benefits - and the small cost - of generalizing means of family planning. It was to be hoped that financial support would be forthcoming from UNICEF to back up its strong words.

44. To convert commitment into action, organizations active in the field of population needed sufficient resources and, when using those resources, they should pool their common experience. Such a synergy, which had helped to reduce fertility by 25 per cent in the developing world in a mere 15 years, had not reached its height either in inter-agency coordination or local cooperation. UNFPA and IPPF must, for instance, work hand-in-hand in a certain number of areas: the cost-effective purchase and distribution of contraceptives, training programmes, improving the status of women, operations research and joint support to national family-planning strategies and programmes.

45. The two organizations had the will, experience and expertise needed, what was lacking was a matching financial commitment from Governments. Two to three per cent of total international development aid during the 1990s would go a long way to ensure that every woman and man who wanted it could have access to family-planning services by the end of the century. That would result in 1.3 billion fewer births by the year 2025. IPPF was willing to play its unique role in meeting the challenges of the 1990s, and was deeply grateful to the many Governments of developed and developing countries which had placed their trust in it.

46. Mr. RADZI (Malaysia) welcomed the various efforts made by UNFPA to enhance its project and programme evaluation procedures and mechanisms. However, evaluation should not be limited to implementation and the problems of implementation but should also analyse the impact and long-term sustainability of assistance, so that the recipient countries might continue to benefit from its multiplier effect. When the impact of the assistance came to an end immediately after the termination of the project, limited resources had been wasted.

47. His delegation approved the inclusion of an evaluation and monitoring component in all UNFPA-assisted projects, but was concerned over the non-submission of evaluation reports to headquarters and the lack of quality of the evaluations, which was due to the increase in the quantity of evaluation exercises to be performed. It should therefore become a mandatory requirement for local offices to submit evaluation reports to headquarters, and only projects which met certain criteria such as cost should be subject to evaluation. His delegation also took note of the efforts made by UNFPA to

familiarize all field and project staff with appropriate evaluation methodologies and procedures through expanded staff training. It welcomed the decision to organize a regional seminar in 1992 to disseminate information on the result of independent and in-depth evaluations of regional and interregional programmes executed by other United Nations agencies, and hoped that Malaysia would be invited to participate in that seminar.

48. Malaysia had been one of the early beneficiaries of the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD). The finalization of the PRSD revised guidelines would undoubtedly make the system an effective tool for the preparation of the country-programming cycle, rendering possible not only the assessment of the achievement of objectives but, more importantly, the identification of issues which would become the basis of future assistance by UNFPA. His delegation noted the UNFPA proposal to undertake 21 PRSD missions, and thematic evaluations of the intercountry programmes in 1992. It also took note of the preparation of the training module on the monitoring and evaluation guidelines.

49. With regard to the work programme for 1993-1996 (DP/1992/26), his delegation had no difficulty in endorsing the Executive Director's recommendations, but it viewed with concern several issues, particularly the fact that, in 1991 Governments' contributions to UNFPA were lower than forecast. In addition, for the second consecutive year, the proportion of expenditure in priority countries had decreased and UNFPA had still failed to reach the target of 80 per cent expenditure for the priority countries, as set by the Governing Council. His delegation would like to be advised on the reasons for the failure and the measures undertaken to meet the target.

50. His delegation endorsed nevertheless the 31 country programmes submitted for approval by the Executive Director. The distribution of resources was very much in line with Council decisions whereby two thirds of the allocation was to be devoted to family planning and information, education and communications projects. The importance accorded by UNFPA to programmes to improve the status of women was also worthy of support. However, the Fund should henceforth make greater efforts to encourage family development, which involved the inculcation of moral values and positive attitudes, in order to create a responsible, progressive and caring society. That qualitative development of human resources, to which Malaysia was committed in its own national development plan, could be achieved by the provision of counselling services, preventive health care, proper nutrition and child care. That was the one area that UNFPA should promote in the future.

51. In the light of uncertainty concerning the funding situation, the UNFPA Executive Director had been quite right to use 8 per cent income growth rather than the 10 per cent initially envisaged for the following four years in the planning of UNFPA's work programme. The distribution of programmable resources was entirely satisfactory, and the priority countries had been given their rightful place in the work programme. His delegation endorsed the proposal to commit the major portion of resources to country activities through country programmes approved by the Council. It also endorsed the allocation of a portion of the resources for one programme to activities in other countries if implementation was delayed. In that connection, it regretted that UNFPA assistance to Malaysia had been continuously decreasing

with the current country programme being allocated only US$ 1.2 million, a reduction of almost 50 per cent in comparison with the previous programme. His delegation urged UNFPA to increase the future allocation to Malaysia to the level of the previous country programme. It had the capacity to absorb the assistance and gain full value from it.

52. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) said that, in 1991, the Canadian International Development Agency had gained a new and very simple mission statement: to help the developing countries to achieve sustainable development. Population was a key factor in the equation of sustainable development. However, the required increases in resources might not be forthcoming, and the UNFPA Executive Director had been right to revise projections of future income for the Fund downwards. The excellent State of World Population 1992 report would help Canadians to understand the importance of increasing support for the population sector.

53. In order to improve its efficiency, the Fund should start by examining the number of projects it supported. At the end of 1991, UNFPA was assisting 3,910 projects, with an average budget of just over US$ 50,000, each having an associated administrative burden. Too many projects plus too much administration equalled excessive costs. The Fund should reduce the number of projects over the coming year in order to ensure that its intervention was cost-effective.

54. With regard to regional technical support services teams, his Government had serious doubts about their proposed operations, since clear lines of accountability were lacking. It was the Fund itself that should evaluate the effectiveness of the technical services, because it was the Fund that was accountable. UNFPA should have a larger role in selecting, overseeing and managing the teams.

55. As for the guidelines on national execution (DP/1992/29), UNFPA should spell out the criteria for selecting the best qualified national executing agents (para. 15) as well as the process by which they were applied. For its part, his delegation's interest was not limited to national executing agencies but extended to all executing agencies and it would therefore like more information on how UNFPA evaluated their performance, whether they were national or other. It was necessary to ensure that selection was truly competitive and depended on satisfactory performance. His delegation would also appreciate a clear definition of the term "legal accountability", as used in paragraph 19.

56. UNFPA and UNICEF had made advances on collaborative programming. His delegation encouraged UNFPA to set operational targets based on the collaborative principles outlined in the report on that question (DP/1992/28) and to give an oral report to the Council in 1993 on its achievements in translating those principles into concrete activities.

57. For a long time, particularly under the influence of its Executive Director, UNFPA had been committed to improving the status of women, not just in terms of family planning, but also in terms of education, employment and empowerment. It should henceforth concentrate also on the establishment of specialized reproductive health services. Often, women had

access only to family-planning services, and AIDS had graphically demonstrated the appalling lack of such specialized services. UNFPA should take a strong leadership role in that field and include reproductive health services in family-planning programmes. Client-centred services made for effective programmes.

58. His Government would make a voluntary contribution to the 1994 Conference on Population and Development, but would give exact details at a later date. His delegation supported the proposal by the representative of Malaysia calling for evaluation to be an integral part of all UNFPA-assisted projects.

59. Mr. LENZI (Italy) recalled that UNFPA's mandate dealt with one of the most sensitive, yet crucial elements of the development equation: the demographic component and, more particularly, the status and participation of women in society. The issue of women in development had become a specific item in every international cooperation programme, like sustainable development, eradication of poverty, and human development. Population issues involved not only reproductive decisions but also the care of children, health and food considerations, ageing, education, employment and migration. In the new international climate, moreover, every people and nation was determined to assert its own traditional values and aspirations. At the root of every society, in the family, women were the custodians of the most basic human values, and the quality of life was primarily founded on the family.

60. The assistance provided by UNFPA as a funding agency consisted of spreading and sharing experience and information and assisting the preparation and implementation of plans nationally arrived at, respecting the freedom and dignity of the individual. UNFPA should therefore show the required flexibility to accommodate diverse national traditions, while seeking common guidelines and, in so doing, UNFPA would benefit from integrating its programmes with those of other United Nations agencies. Each nation should decide its own demographic policies and each family should make its own choices. They should all be provided with the means of achieving balanced and sustainable social development, which was essential to any economic advancement. The basic conviction should be spread that no sustainable development was possible with uncontrolled population growth.

61. The UNFPA Executive Director had thus quite rightly respected many sensitivities in proposing the way forward. The 1994 Conference on Population and Development would be crucial in stimulating the sense of responsibility of one and all. For its part, Italy, a zero demographic growth country, had increased its contribution to UNFPA and his delegation intended to participate in the expert groups and regional preparatory meetings for the Conference, whose themes appropriately included migratory flows, ageing and the environment. It endorsed the 1991 UNFPA annual report, and the financial statement and programme of work contained therein.

62. Mr. EDSTROM (Observer for Sweden) speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden), said that, if global development on a sustainable basis was to be brought about, it was essential to understand that demographic policy, the alleviation of poverty and environmental concerns were inextricably linked. Reduction in population growth was essential to efforts to resolve the problems related to poverty and

the environment. Primary responsibility for initiating and implementing population policy rested with national Governments, while UNFPA's role was to assist in building national capacity for policy formulation. In the Executive Director's report for 1991, as well as in much of UNFPA's documentation in general, the Nordic countries would have welcomed a more problem-oriented and analytical approach, with discussion of the impediments that UNFPA encountered.

63. Family planning should remain a main focus for UNFPA's work, the methodology used being adapted to individual countries. The fact that 300 million women did not have access to family planning was a major cause for anxiety. Therefore, the Nordic countries welcomed the introduction of the global initiative on contraceptive requirements and logistic management, since it was through such activities that it was possible to give everyone the right of self-determination in that field. The ethical dimension was a sine qua non for population policies. Alongside family planning, other kinds of activity were also extremely important, in particular those in favour of girls and women, which were designed to redress educational imbalances.

64. Since UNFPA was responsible for ensuring that population issues formed an integral part of United Nations development activities, it should not only increase the problem awareness within its field of competence but also build institutional capacities in the service of the common goal. Close cooperation should be maintained not only with UNICEF but also with WHO, UNESCO and the World Bank. In that context, the Nordic countries would welcome a clearer definition of UNFPA's role and comparative advantage vis à vis other United Nations bodies working in related areas.

65. Cooperation and comparative advantage were not enough, however, since inventiveness was needed in building capacity for nationally executed programmes and ensuring that information and education programmes were targeted at the male population. A higher degree of realism in planning and budgeting would give a better understanding of the problems ahead.

66. An optimal division of labour was especially important for the preparatory work for, and the follow-up to, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the 1994 Conference on Population and Development. The first expert meetings for the latter event had already taken place, but the Nordic countries hoped that the political process would also get under way among both policy makers and the general public. Without such a political process, the Nordic countries, which were poised to participate fully in the 1994 Conference and its follow-up, were concerned that the Conference would inevitably be unproductive.

67. Mr. WAGNER (France) said he fully endorsed UNFPA's programme, the activities of its fieldworkers, its administration and the Executive Director's 1991 report, which was particularly to be welcomed since its approach was "non-catastrophic" and it reported on the progress made by developing countries. The Executive Director of UNFPA had also been quite right to stress that population should be integrated in all the other development parameters. It was encouraging to note that 55 per cent of resources were reserved for the poorest countries, as the participants of the

Paris Conference on the Least Developed Countries had urged, and that 32 per cent was to be allocated to Africa. His delegation was very much in favour of the implementation of programmes and projects by Governments and saw no reason why that should be given up, whatever difficulties were encountered. In that connection, it would appreciate further information on the withdrawal from national execution noted in 1991 in several countries.

68. His Government's contribution to UNFPA had risen. It had also increased its bilateral assistance. In 1991, it had organized a conference on the theme "Rapid Population Growth and Development in Africa" and the discussions had proved most constructive. It was already very advanced in its preparations for the 1994 Conference on Population and Development, and its report would submit to UNFPA well before the deadline. In 1992, a meeting of experts was to be held in Paris and a major exhibition entitled "Six Billion People" would be organized, initially at the Museum of Mankind, and subsequently sent on tour.

69. However, on some issues, his delegation was less optimistic than the UNFPA Executive Director. In particular, cooperation between executing agencies, especially in the field, did not appear to be very satisfactory. Moreover, while it was useful to improve the coordination of activities, donors wanted greater consistency in all aspects of the programmes and projects. His Government endorsed UNFPA's intention to intensify work on women and girls, and was itself going to participate in bilateral programmes in that area in 1992, but thought it was important not to neglect the education of men.

70. His delegation also noted that the consistency and balance between UNFPA's various objectives was not as clear as the Executive Director had made out in her introductory statement. In particular, family-planning programmes often seemed to develop at the expense of other programmes. It was clearly necessary, as some members of the Governing Council had already stated, that UNFPA should focus its activities more, and spread itself less thinly. His Government was surprised to see that some country programmes had completely unrealistic targets.

71. His delegation regretted that the important report which had been issued on the state of the world's population was not available in French. It further deplored the great delay in which reports submitted to the Governing Council were published in French. Such publication delays compromised the effectiveness of UNPFA's programme throughout the French-speaking world.

72. Mr. GRAISSE (Secretary of the Governing Council) said that the preparatory work for UNCED had considerably delayed the translation into all the working languages of reports submitted to the Governing Council.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.